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LITERATURE.

EIGHT YEARS IN CANADA, &c.

EMBRACING A REVIEW OF THE SEVERAL ADMINISTRATIONS OF LORDS DURHAM AND SYDENHAM, SIR CHARLES BAGOT, AND LORD METCALFE;

And Dedicated to the Memories of
THE FIRST AND LAST OF THESE DISTINGUISHED DEAD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ECARTE," &c.

DE OMNIBUS REBUS ET QUIBUSDAM ALIIS.

[A difficulty of arrangement having occurred with the only two London publishers to whom the following pages have been submitted, the Author has decided on reversing the usual practice, and publishing in Canada first, thus affording that means of direct communication with other metropolitan publishers, which his absence from London renders a matter of much inconvenience. It will be borne in mind, therefore, by the Canadian reader, that what is now offered to his perusal, was intended for an English public.]

[Deposited at the Office of the Registrar of the Province.]

(CHAPTER IX. CONTINUED.)

quarters to the mess-room (for it was after dinner, and over our wine, that we entered upon the ceremony,) a couple of carving-knives supplied each officer with a relic, and before the burning of the mass, with their poles, had commenced. My old companion now showed me his portion, which he had religiously preserved, but I had unfortunately lost mine, even since my return to Canada.

Although, since my short stay in Cornwall, almost every trace of snow had disappeared, and my friend strongly recommended me to exchange my sleigh for a waggon, I still cherished the hope that winter had not yet wholly disappeared; but that some opportune fall would enable me to continue the use of my runners. At length my anticipation seemed gratified. The snow began one afternoon to descend, and in such large flakes, that the ground was speedily covered. Delighted at the prospect, I rallied my friend on his seeming want of knowledge of the caprices of his native climate, and expressed my intention to be off on the following morning at daylight, and before any of the family were up. He shrugged his shoulders with a dryness of manner peculiar to him, and replied that, if I expected to derive any advantage from the snow which was then falling, I literally "counted without my host"—that it was what is termed a "wet snow," the wind coming from the wrong quarter to render it lasting; and that moreover, as the roads were not frozen, the morrow's sun would dissipate the thin veil, and leave me to flounder through mud and "slush," until I should heartily repent that I had not followed his advice, and exchanged my sleigh for some more appropriate vehicle. I, however, persisted, and on the following morning the ponies, who had had four days' of good food and rest to restore them, were once more on their way to the West. For the first four or five miles we went on smoothly enough, but as the day advanced, and the sun, then acquiring power, imparted its warmth to the earth, the snow began gradually to disappear, and was only to be met with in detached parts, and where the deep shadows of the woods, through which we occasionally passed, prevented its rays from penetrating. Finally, as we gained the more open country, the journey became one of infinite distress, and such was the severity of punishment to the ponies, that, in order to relieve them, I was compelled to walk at their side for hours, ankle-deep in mud, with the reins in my hands. The distance from Cornwall to Brockville is between sixty and seventy miles, and this it took me two days to accomplish, with hard labor to the horses, and scarcely less fatigue to the driver. My tiger occasionally walked, but much oftener rode.

On reaching Brockville, about nine o'clock the second night after my departure from Cornwall, I found myself in quarters very different from those I had just quitted. There was not a good hotel in the place, and the best of the indifferent was kept by a Yankee, who had long resided in the town, and whom a successful business—his being the stage-house—had rendered "pretty considerably independent"—a condition which, by the way, is applica-

ble to most persons in Canada who keep inns, and (what are meant to be) houses of accommodation for travellers. Here, after having seen my horses properly attended to, I sat down to a not very choice supper, which had been prepared under the expectation that my servant and myself were to eat it together, yet which, in following our respective inclinations, we devoured separately. I was then shewn, at my request, to one of the best bed-rooms my host had to give me. Completely knocked up with my day's work, I was so disposed to sleep that I could with difficulty keep my eyes open during supper. I had not, therefore, much time, nor did I experience any inclination, to criticize the apartment which had been allotted to me, and which, on the following morning, I found was bounded on all sides, save that which admitted the light, by a thin unpainted wooden partition, the loosened and shrunken joints of which allowed the eye to explore the mysteries of two adjoining sleeping-rooms, in one of which, as was evidenced by scattered petticoats and bonnets, some interesting and not "too-devilish-particular" female had reposed. No sooner had my head touched the pillow than I fell deliciously asleep. But it was not fated this luxurious state of repose should last. I could not have been more than an hour in bed, when I was awakened by the most infernal noises that ever assailed the quiet of a slumbering man. A party of dissolute and dissipated fellows of that class which is known, both in Canada and the United States, under the expressive designation of "loafer," were carousing in a room not far from that in which I lay; and one of them—a ventriloquist—was amusing himself and his equally intellectual friends, by imitating the braying of asses—the lowing of oxen—the mewling of cats, and the crowing of cocks, in such a manner, that I could not but believe the object of this horrible din was to disturb me. I got out of bed, threw on my dressing-gown and slippers, went into the passage, and, in no very amiable tone, I confess, demanded to know who it was who presumed to raise such a disturbance in the house at that hour of the night, to the great annoyance of those who preferred sleep to being tormented with their blackguardism. There was a discontinuance of the noise, but no answer, and taking it for granted that my expostulation would prove a sufficient check upon their unseemly conduct, I returned to my bed, but sleep was no longer to be met with there. After passing a most wretched night, in vain endeavors to renew the sweet slumbers from which I had been so cruelly awakened, I rose at an early hour, for the purpose of repeating the task of the preceding day, until I should reach Kingston (sixty miles from Brockville), where it was my intention to stop for a few days, until I could have a waggon prepared for the long journey which was yet before me. Apologies were made to me by the delinquents, but there was no recompense for the heaviness and ill-humor with which I had risen from my miserable bed, to the untempting appearance of which fatigue alone had blinded me.

How seldom and how imperfectly can we read into the page of the future, and how often do the most important actions of a man's life take their rise in the most trifling causes. Little did I conceive at the time that this display of ventriloquism would prove to have been the first link in the chain of events which was to make this Brockville—a place I had so much reason to detest, and which I entertained no desire to behold again—my resting-place in Canada. Yet so it was. I had ordered my horses to be harnessed, and given other necessary instructions to my tiger, when an old half-pay officer and friend of my own entered the room where I was packing up my trunk, and entreated that I would delay my departure until I had seen the father of the youth who had disturbed my night's rest, and for whose conduct he was anxious to make some excuse. Not caring or thinking more of the matter, I urged that this was quite unnecessary, but that I should feel pleasure in delaying my departure for an hour or two, and calling, as he suggested, on the old gentleman, who was then residing with his relative, Colonel —, Collector of the Customs of the place. We called. The answer was "Not at home"; and we had handed in our cards to the servant, and were some paces from the house on our return, when the door was again opened, and a young lady, fat, fair, and eighteen—in short, all but in years a George the Fourth style of beauty—made her appearance, who, after apologizing for the mistake of the servant, very politely insisted on our re-entering. The invitation, coming as it did from such a quarter, could not well be declined. We